

Message Text

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40

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

RSR-01 /121 W

----- 006070

R 081630 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1788

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

SECDEF WASHDC

COMSIXTH FLT

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

USS AYLWIN

COMDESRON TWO SIX

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 2558

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, TS

SUBJECT: VISIT OF USS AYLWIN TO TUNIS SCHEDULED MAY 15

REF: CAIRO 1340

DEPT PASS CAIRO

SECDEF FOR DIA

1. CAIRO MESSAGE UNDER REFERENCE (NOTAL) REPORTS PRESSURES
FOR ACTION AGAINST U. S. INTERESTS IN ARAB WORLD ON MAY 15,
AND INTER ALIA CALLS UPON ARAB STATES NOT TO HOST OR PROVIDE
CONFIDENTIAL

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FACILITIES FOR U. S. SIXTH FLEET VESSELS. THIS PORTION
CLEARLY DIRECTED PRIMARILY AGAINST TUNISIA, SINCE WITH
EXCEPTION FEW SIXTH FLEET VISITS TO MOROCCO, TUNISIA IS
ONLY ARAB COUNTRY IN MEDITERRANEAN PROVIDING SUCH

" HOSPITALITY.".

2. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT GOT WOULD BEND TO ANY SUCH PRESSURES. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE IT ADVISABLE IN PRESENT SITUATION TO DELAY FOR TWENTY- FOUR HOURS ARRIVAL OF USS AYLWIN, SIXTH FLEET DESTROYER, WHICH SCHEDULED ARRIVE TUNIS (PORT LA GOULETTE) ON MAY 15. THIS RECOMMENDATION NOT BASED ON ANY REAL CONCERN AT THIS TIME FOR SECURITY OF SHIP, SINCE WE BELIVE GOT HAS BOTH WILL AND CAPABILITY TO PREVENT SUCH ACTIONS. NEVERTHELESS, PROVIDED THAT AGITATION IN ARAB WORLD FOR ACTIONS AGAINST U. S. INTERESTS CONTINUES-- POINTED TOWARD ISRAELI ANNIVERSARY MAY 15 -- WE BELIEVE THAT BRINGING SIXTH FLEET DESTROYER INTO TUNIS PRECISELY ON THAT DAY COULD EASILY BE MISINTERPRETED AS A PROVOCATION. WE WOULD NOT WISH CANCEL VISIT, AND ON BALANCE WE DO NOT RECOMMEND CHANGING VISIT TO ANOTHER TUNISIAN PORT, AS WE CERTAINLY WOULD NOT WISH TO APPEAR TO BE SUCCUMBING TO PRESSURES FROM ANTI- U. S. FORCES IN ARAB WORLD. WE NEVERTHELESS BELIEVE IT ADVISABLE TO AVOID UNNECESSARY PROVOCATION. WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT VISIT BE POSTPONED TWENTY- FOUR HOURS AS OUTLINED ABOVE. WE WOULD NOT PLAN TELL GOT REASONS FOR POSTPONEMENT, BUT INFORM THEM ONLY THAT VISIT DELAYED FOR TECHNICAL REASONS.

3. FOR USS AYLWIN. DEPARTURE DATE WOULD REMAIN MAY 18 AS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED. THOUGH WE ANTICIPATE NO DIFFICULTIES AT THIS TIME, YOU SHOULD BE PREPARED TO TIGHTEN SECURITY OF SHIP AND PERSONNEL AND TO ABORT VISIT IF ADVERSE SITUATION FURTHER DEVELOPS.

4. FOR BEIRUT AND CAIRO. WOULD APPRECIATE FOLLOW- UP REPORTS ON AGITATION FOR ANTI- US, ACTIONS MAY 15. WE NOTE CAIRO REPORT PRECEDED BY SIMILAR AGITATION IN BEIRUT.

SEELYE

NOTE BY OC/ T: NOT PASSED CAIRO.

CONFIDENTIAL

NMAFVVZCZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 02 APR 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: willialc
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TUNIS02558
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730559/abqceaca.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: CAIRO 1340
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03-Aug-2001 by boyleja>; APPROVED <03-Oct-2001 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF USS AYLWIN TO TUNIS SCHEDULED MAY 15
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To: STATE INFO BEIRUT
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